

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-7, 9-14, 16, 17 and 19-21 remain pending in the application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 10, 16 and 17 are amended; and claims 8, 15 and 18 are canceled.

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indications on page 10 of the Office Action that claims 8 and 18 contain allowable subject matter. In response, independent claims 1 and 10 are amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter, along with any intervening claim, to place the application in condition for allowance.

In numbered paragraph 2, page 2 of the Office Action, independent claims 1 and 10, along with various dependent claims, are rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,938,080 (Haaser et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 6,516,245 (Dirksing et al.). In numbered paragraph 3, page 6 of the Office Action, independent claims 1 and 10, along with various dependent claims, are rejected as being unpatentable over the Haaser et al. patent in view of U.S. Patent 6,793,387 (Neas et al.). In numbered paragraph 4, page 8 of the Office Action, independent claims 1 and 10, along with various dependent claims, are rejected as being unpatentable over the Haaser et al. patent in view of U.S. Patent 6,763,860 (Jungmann et al.). While the Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections, in the interest of advancing the prosecution of the application, the claims have been amended to place the application in condition for allowance.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant's independent claims 1 and 10 are allowable. The remaining claims depend from the respective independent claims

and recite additional advantageous features which further distinguish over the documents relied upon by the Examiner. As such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

All objections and rejections raised in the Office Action having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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